THE LADDER

CONVENTION ISSUE

MAY
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purpose of the

Daughters of BILITIS

A WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROMOTING THE INTEGRATION OF THE HOMOSEXUAL INTO SOCIETY BY:

1. Education of the variant, with particular emphasis on the psychological, physiological and sociological aspects, to enable her to understand herself and make her adjustment to society in all its social, civic and economic implications--this to be accomplished by establishing and maintaining as complete a library as possible of both fiction and non-fiction literature on the sex deviant theme; by sponsoring public discussions on pertinent subjects to be conducted by leading members of the legal, psychiatric, religious and other professions; by advocating a mode of behavior and dress acceptable to society.

2. Education of the public at large through acceptance first of the individual, leading to an eventual breakdown of erroneous taboos and prejudices; through public discussion meetings aforementioned; through dissemination of educational literature on the homosexual theme.

3. Participation in research projects by duly authorized and responsible psychologists, sociologists and other such experts directed towards further knowledge of the homosexual.

4. Investigation of the penal code as it pertains to the homosexual, proposal of changes to provide an equitable handling of cases involving this minority group, and promotion of these changes through due process of law in the state legislatures.

MAY 1960
VOLUME 4, NUMBER 8

the Ladder

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NATIONAL OFFICERS, DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS, INC.

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Publications Director – Sten Russell
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THE LADDER is regarded as a sounding board for various points of view on the homophile and related subjects and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the organization.

contents

CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS..... 4
THE HOUSE ON THE BORDERLAND..... 5
WHY AM I A LESBIAN?..... 7
HERE AND THERE..... 8
BEGINNING – DOB BOOK SERVICE..... 9
LESBIANA..... 10
MOOD MISCELLANEA..... 12
DOB CONVENTION PROGRAM..... 13
BOOKS..... 17
READERS RESPOND..... 23

COVER BY DON FROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY JEFF WIENER

CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

Convention time (May 27-30) is fast approaching. Full details on the program will be found elsewhere in this issue.

This, primarily, is to issue everyone an invitation to attend. We feel we have an extremely varied and interesting program - one which will provide food for thought and discussion for many months to come.

Housing can be provided for out-of-towners, if we are advised in advance. We would also warn you that the climate in San Francisco is unpredictable. A suit and/or topcoat are advisable, as are lighter clothes (in case it is warm) and informal wear. Convention activities will be varied.

We must know in advance how many are coming so that we can let the hotel know how many lunches and dinners are necessary. So send in your reservations NOW. For your convenience a reservation blank is enclosed in this issue.

Price for the entire Saturday session, including luncheon and banquet, is $12.50. This program is open to the public.

Prices for single sessions are as follows:

Morning session	$2.00
Luncheon	$5.00
Afternoon session	$2.00
Banquet	$6.00

This is DOB's first National Convention, and everyone in San Francisco has worked very hard to make it a success. The next convention will not be until 1962.

Remember, we must have your registration in advance. So send your check now - either in the full amount of $12.50 or for a deposit of at least $5.00.

SEE YOU AT THE CONVENTION!

The House on the Borderland

A Fable by Miriam Gardner

I live in a strange house. I call it the House on the Borderland.

On one hand there stretches the ordinary sunlit world of every day. On the other hand there stretches a shadowy waste. Some writers, facile with easy phrases, call it a "Twilight World" or a "Well of Loneliness" or some other strange and colorful name.

> "A soft air fans the cloud apart; There comes a
> glimpse of that dark world where I was born."

I have tried to live in the sunlit world. I find the light hurts my eyes. The brightly colored men and women of that world look at me strangely. Their language is a strange language to my ears. I can venture among them masked and mantled as a pretender; unmasked they would drive me forth with sticks and stones and harsh words.

And I have lived in the shadows. With groping steps I explored further and further into the darkness. Great robed and hooded forms walk there, looming, distant and silent, strange and alien. The flowers and the colors are dimmed and familiar, like something known in childhood and recognized with tears and laughter and joy of home-coming. I know this to be my world, my homecoming, my life.

But like Persephone, I have eaten of the pomegranate seeds of the other world, and it tugs at me with a sharp, imperious command. I walk in the dark world, under the moon of happiness, and I hear in memory the sobs of a forgotten child, and see the beseeching eyes of those under the sun I loved.

I was very young when I lived in the sunlight. I did not know the shadows were my world. And so unwitting I tasted the fatal seeds; and forever, forever, the eyes and voices and cries of those I would leave alone in the strange sun must pull me back. And so in the dark world of my happiness I must walk like a blinded stranger,

WITH NO RIGHT TO LIFT MY EYES OR STRETCH FORTH MY HANDS TO MY SISTERS THERE.

I AM NOT ALONE IN THE HOUSE ON THE BORDERLAND. MANY CLUSTER THERE, DRAWN IRRESISTABLY TO THE DARK MOONLIGHT, HEARING THE BEBEECHING VOICES FROM THE SUNLIT WORLD. OUR VOICES ARE SMALL AND SILENT. WE HAVE NO PART IN THE BRIGHT WORLD OF DAY, BUT IN THE WORLD UNDER THE MOON WE ARE EQUALLY OUTCAST, REGARDED AS TRAITORS, COWARDS, UNSCRUPULULOUS THRILL-SEEKERS.

IN THE SUNLIT WORLD WE ARE TOLERATED BECAUSE OF OUR HOSTAGES THERE. OUR HUSBANDS KNOW THEY HAVE WEDDED FAIRY WOMEN, MERMAIDS, SEAL-WOMEN FROM OLD LEGENDS, WHO REMAIN ONLY WHILE SOME TALISMAN HOSTAGE HOLDS US SAFE. A PLEDGE; THE CRY OF A CHILD. WE CAST NO SHADOWS IN THE LIGHT, AND WE WALK LIKE THE MERMAID OF THE FAIRY TALE, ACROSS A PATH OF SHARP KNIVES; BUT WE MAY LIVE THERE.

WE HAVE LOST OUR HERITAGE IN THE DARK WORLD. OUR SISTERS SIT AND SING ON THE ROCKS OF THE SEA, LAUGHING, SOMETIMES JEERING AT US WHEN WE STRETCH OUR HANDS TO THEM.

I KNOW I AM NOT ALONE IN THE HOUSE ON THE BORDERLAND, FOR ALL AROUND ME I HEAR THE STEPS AND WHISPERS OF THOSE WHO LIVE IN THIS STRANGE WORLD WITH ME, TIED BY INVISIBLE BONDS, ALLOWED TO VENTURE ONLY A FEW STEPS EITHER WAY.

BUT I DO NOT SEE THEM ALL AROUND ME. I AM AS IF ALONE HERE.

YOU THINK IT IS DARK IN THE SHADOWS? YOU BELIEVE IN THE SUNNY WORLD OF EVERY DAY?

COME LIVE FOR A DAY IN THE HOUSE ON THE BORDERLAND, AND YOU WOULD RETURN IN JOY AND REJOICING TO WHICHEVER WORLD YOU MAY CALL WHOLLY YOUR OWN.

"They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety."

- Benjamin Franklin

Why Am I a Lesbian?

WHY AM I A LESBIAN? BECAUSE THAT IS WHAT I WANT TO BE. PERHAPS IT IS DUE TO A TRICK OF MOTHER NATURE OR THE RESULT OF CHILDHOOD ENVIRONMENT, BUT I DO NOT THINK OF IT THAT WAY. MEDICAL DOCTORS OR PSYCHIATRISTS MAY SOMEDAY PROVE THAT ONE OR BOTH OF THESE CONDITIONS CONTRIBUTE TO LESBIANISM, AND THIS WILL DOUBTLESS BRING GREAT COMFORT TO THOSE WHO SEEK TO POINT RESENTFUL FINGERS OF BLAME AT FATE OR THEIR PARENTS. FOR MYSELF, I AM NOT IN THE LEAST EMBITTERED BY THE FACT THAT I PREFER PHYSICAL RELATIONSHIP WITH ONE OF MY OWN SEX. I FEEL THAT EVERY HUMAN BEING HAS A RIGHT TO LIVE HIS LIFE THE WAY HE CHOOSES, PROVIDED IT DOES NOT INTERFERE WITH THE INDIVIDUAL HAPPINESS OF OTHERS AND PROVIDED HE CONDUCTS HIMSELF AS A GOOD CITIZEN.

I AM A LESBIAN BECAUSE I FEEL THAT I HAVE A DUTY, NOT ONLY TO MYSELF BUT TO SOCIETY, TO FOLLOW THE DICTATES OF MY OWN SEXUAL PREFERENCE RATHER THAN TO MAKE A FALSE ATTEMPT AT HETEROSEXUALITY, WHICH WOULD BE UNFAIR TO MYSELF, MY HUSBAND, AND OUR CHILDREN.

I AM A LESBIAN BECAUSE I HAVE CHOSEN THE TYPE OF LIFE BEST SUITED TO ME, AND IT HAS BROUGHT HAPPINESS TO ME AND MY BELOVED ASSOCIATE FOR MORE THAN TWO DECADES BY ACKNOWLEDGING WHAT WE ARE AND STRIVING TO MAKE THE MOST OF THE PARTICULAR KIND OF LIFE IT ENTAILS.

WHY AM I A HAPPY LESBIAN? BECAUSE I REALIZE THAT THE PROBLEMS WHICH CONFRONT ME, AS A HOMOSEXUAL, ARE INTENSIFIED BY MY OWN THINKING. UNHAPPINESS IN DAILY CONTACTS AND HOME RELATIONSHIPS DOES NOT REFER SPECIFICALLY TO HOMOSEXUALS, FOR MANY PROBLEMS FACE EVERYONE--NOT BECAUSE HE IS HOMOSEXUAL OR HETEROSEXUAL BUT BECAUSE LIFE ITSELF PRESENTS VARIOUS PROBLEMS, ALL OF WHICH WE ARE GIVEN THE ABILITY TO SOLVE.

SO THE QUESTION "WHY AM I A LESBIAN?" IS EASILY ANSWERED. THE QUESTION "HOW SHALL I LIVE MY LIFE AS A LESBIAN?" IS OF FAR GREATER IMPORT, FOR INSTEAD OF LEADING TO SELF-ABSORPTION IT

LEADS TO BROADER HORIZONS AND RESULTS IN SELF-IMPROVEMENT. ONLY THUS CAN I SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF LIVING IN A SOCIETY WHICH HAS NOT YET ACCEPTED LESBIANISM AS A WHOLE BUT WHICH ACCEPTS THE LESBIAN AS AN INDIVIDUAL IF SHE IS WILLING NOT ONLY TO SEEK UNDERSTANDING BY HETEROSEXUALS BUT TO CONTRIBUTE TO IT ON A MUTUAL BASIS. WHEN THAT OCCURS, THE QUESTION "WHY AM I A LESBIAN?" IS NOT A MERE SEARCHING FOR MYSTERIOUS CAUSES. IT BECOMES A QUESTION THAT IS ANSWERED BY THE INNER HAPPINESS I HAVE FOUND--I AM A LESBIAN BECAUSE THAT IS WHAT I WANT TO BE.

Here and There

NEW YORK, N.Y. - THE STATE LIQUOR AUTHORITY IN OCTOBER ANNOUNCED A CAMPAIGN AGAINST BARS "PATRONIZED BY PROSTITUTES AND HOMOSEXUALS", REPORTS THE MATTACHINE SOCIETY'S NEW YORK AREA COUNCIL. SIXTEEN INVESTIGATORS WERE BROUGHT IN TO ASSIST THE LOCAL STAFF IN THE "CLEAN-UP". SPORADIC CLOSINGS CONTINUED THROUGH THE WINTER, CULMINATING MARCH 1 IN THE MASS CLOSING OF MOST OF THE REMAINING GAY BARS. NEWSPAPER ACCOUNTS OF THE FIRST CLOSINGS FREQUENTLY CONTAINED SUCH PHRASES AS "PERMITTING HOMOSEXUALS AND DEGENERATES ON THE PREMISES" AND "ENCOURAGING A HOMOSEXUAL CLIENTELE".

THE CAMPAIGN IS PROBABLY PROMPTED BY LEE MORTIMER'S COLUMN IN THE "DAILY MIRROR", REPORTS THE N.Y. MATTACHINE NEWSLETTER. SINCE LAST AUGUST HE HAS BEEN ATTACKING THE "MAFIA BOSSES WHO CONTROL EVERY QUEER

AUGUST HE HAS BEEN ATTACKING THE "MAFIA BOSSES WHO CONTROL EVERY QUEER DIVE AND CALL-GIRL JOINT IN THE CITY". SOMETIMES A MENTION IN HIS COLUMN WAS QUICKLY FOLLOWED BY A BAR CLOSING. ALTHOUGH MORTIMER HAS AIMED HIS CAMPAIGN AT THE CRIME SYNDICATES, HIS ANTI-HOMOSEXUAL BIAS IS WELL-KNOWN, THE ARTICLE STATES. HE CLEARLY ASSUMES BARS WHERE HOMOSEXUALS CONGREGATE ARE IN FACT ILLEGAL.

"THE RIGHT OF WELL-BEHAVED PERSONS, WHETHER HETEROSEXUAL OR HOMOSEXUAL, TO CONGREGATE IN A PUBLIC PLACE IS," THE NEWSLETTER SAYS, "PROTECTED BY THE U.S. CONSTITUTION."

THE MATTACHINE NEW YORK AREA COUNCIL HAS ESTABLISHED A COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE THE SITUATION. THE COMMITTEE IS NOW IN CONTACT WITH LAWYERS, BAR-OPERATORS AND CIVIL LIBERTIES GROUPS.

BEGINNING - DOB Book Service

After much soul-searching, and many requests from friends and readers of THE LADDER, Daughters of Bilitis has decided to start a book service, dealing primarily in fiction and non-fiction concerning the Lesbian.

Our present selection of titles is small, but it will grow each month. And, although small, we believe each title to be good in the area covered. Now for sale are:

SEX VARIANT WOMEN IN LITERATURE, A Historical and Quantitative Survey, by Jeannette H. Foster, Ph.D. Autographed by the author. $5.00 plus 20 cents handling.

This is a careful and complete examination of all Lesbian literature from antiquity to 1956, under the thesis that the literature of any specific day reflects the thinking of that day. Listed in THE LADDER for May 1957; #10 on the "Lesbiana" list.

CHRIST AND THE HOMOSEXUAL by the Rev. Robert W. Wood. $3.95 plus 20 cents handling. See page 20 of this issue for review.

ODD GIRL and THE THIRD SEX by Artemis Smith. Paperbacks. 35 cents plus 10 cents handling for each title.

Two novels on Lesbian life, well-written and ending happily. "Odd Girl" is reviewed in THE LADDER for June 1959, #104 on the "Lesbiana" list; "The Third Sex" is #131 on the list in the March 1960 LADDER.

COMPLETE CUMULATIVE CHECKLIST OF LESBIAN LITERATURE compiled by Marian Zimmer Bradley. $1.50 plus 10 cents handling. A complete index of Lesbian and homosexual literature. See THE LADDER for April 1960.

Remittance should accompany all orders. Address request to DOB Book Service 165 O'Farrell St., Room 405, San Francisco 2, California.

LESBIANA

BY GENE DAMON

141. JOURNEY TO A WOMAN BY ANN BANNON. FAWCETT GOLD MEDAL, 1960

THIS IS MISS BANNON'S FOURTH LESBIAN NOVEL AND PERHAPS IT IS HER BEST TO DATE. IT IS CLEAR THAT SHE IS BECOMING A SPOKESMAN FOR HER PEOPLE. ONCE AGAIN SHE WRITES OF THE SAME GROUP OF PEOPLE THAT APPEARED IN ODD GIRL OUT, I AM A WOMAN AND WOMEN IN THE SHADOWS, BUT THIS NOVEL GOES BACK TO THE OTHER HEROINE OF THE FIRST BOOK, BETH, AND COVERS FULLY A 10-YEAR PERIOD IN HER CHARACTERS' LIVES.

RISING ABOVE ALL THE OTHERS, MISS BANNON'S PORTRAIT OF BEEBO BRINKER MAKES BEEBO THE MAIN CHARACTER. THE WHOLE BOOK CAN BE SUMMED UP BY QUOTING THE WORDS BETH USES TO DESCRIBE BEEBO WHEN BETH IS FIRST BECOMING AWARE OF LOVE FOR HER. SHE LOOKS AT BEEBO'S FACE AND THINKS:

"THERE WAS WISDOM IN IT AND THE TRACE OF PAIN LIVED THROUGH AND LEARNED FROM, AND A VERY SPECIAL PERSONAL BEAUTY THAT ALMOST NO ONE ELSE WOULD HAVE CALLED BY THAT GENTLE NAME." VERY HIGHLY RECOMMENDED FOR EVERYONE.

142. STRANGER ON LESBOS BY VALERIE TAYLOR, FAWCETT (CREST) 1960.

FRANCES, 35-YEAR-OLD WIFE AND MOTHER, FEELS IGNORED AND DESERTED. SHE ENROLLS IN A UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO LITERATURE COURSE TO ALLEVIATE HER BOREDOM. SHE MEETS THE HIGHLY ATTRACTIVE MARY BAKER, A TV EXEC IN HER LATE TWENTIES WORKING FOR AN M.A. DEGREE IN HER SPARE TIME.

FOR THE FIRST HALF OF THE BOOK THE AUTHOR DELINEATES A CONVINCING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO WOMEN, AND SOME OF THE PASSAGES ARE SURPRISINGLY WELL WRITTEN FOR A PAPERBACK. THE LAST HALF OF THE BOOK IS THE USUAL STEROTYPED PAPERBACK NOVEL

WHICH ENDS WITH FRANCES IN HER HUSBAND'S ARMS. RECOMMENDED FOR THE "GALE WILHELM" STYLE IN THE EARLY PARTS OF THE LOVE AFFAIR.

143. THE SCIENTISTS BY ELEAZAR LIPSKY. APPLETON, 1959. (ALSO PAPERBACK)

THIS IS A NOVEL CONERNED WITH SUPPOSED THEFT OF A SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERY. ONE OF THE SIX MAJOR CHARACTERS IS DR. JOSEPHINE ULLMAN (JO). THE AUTHOR CREATES NO PROBLEMS, PHILOSOPHY OR COMMENT ARROUND JO, BUT HE DEFINITELY MAKES CLEAR THROUGH INNUENDO THAT SHE IS A LESBIAN. TOWARD THE END OF THE BOOKS SHE APPEARS TO BE ENJOYING A MUTUALLY HAPPY LIFE WITH SIX-FOOT NORA. THIS IS TAKEN FOR GRANTED, IN FACT TREATED SO NATURALLY THAT AN UNTRAINED EYE COULD OVER-LOOK IT ALTOGETHER.

144. THE GOLDEN CAGE BY TERESKA TORRES. DIAL, 1959.

NOVEL OF THE ENTAGLED RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN A GROUP OF REFUGEES CAUGHT FOR A SUMMER IN PORTUGAL IN 1940. PASCALE, NEAR 40, HAS A LESBIAN AFFAIR IN HER PAST; HER MARRIAGE IS AN EMPTY SHELL, AND LIFE IS PRECARIOUS. AN ENGLISH DIVORCEE'S 15-YEAR-OLD DAUGHTER, DEBBY, WHO IS SO CONSPICOUSLY MASCULINE THAT THE REST OF THE CAST SPEAKS OF HER AS A BURGEONING LESBIAN, FALLS IN LOVE WITH PASCALE. THE INTERLUDES BETWEEN THEM AND THE SECTIONS TELLING OF PASCALE'S PAST OCCUPY OVER ONE-FIFTH OF THE BOOK. THE AUTHORESS IS VERY SYMPATHETIC, BUT THAT IS TO BE EXPECTED WHEN ONE RECALLS THAT OUT OF HER FOUR NOVELS, MISS TORRES HAS TREATED LESBIANISM THREE TIMES AND VARIANCE ONCE FOR A BATTING AVERAGE OF 1000.

145. ROOM TO SWING BY ED LACY. HARPER, 1957.

THIS WELL-CONSTRUCTED MYSTERY TOOK THE MYSTERY WRITERS OF AMERICAN AWARD FOR 1957. A NEGRO DETECTIVE IS HIRED BY TWO LESBIANS TO SHADOW A MAN. THE MAN IS MURDERED AND THE DETECTIVE FRAMED. THE LESBIANS ARE BOTH ATTRACTIVE AND INTERESTING, BUT ARE NOT REALISTICALLY DRAWN. THE RELATIONSHIP IS MADE VERY CLEAR BUT DOES NOT DIRECTLY AFFECT THE PLOT. UNLIKE OTHER MYSTERIES WHICH TOUCH ON THE LESBIAN THEME, THIS BOOK HOLDS NO CONDEMNATION FOR THE RELATIONSHIP.

mood miscellanea

INIQUITY

Dedicated to Gale Wilhelm

I see no reason for what you have done,
At least no sound purpose in your act.
How do you excuse yourself to the muse
Who blessed your prose, each dot, each fact?

Did you think we would not care,
Nor berate ourselves for failing you,
Not miss the warmth of your real people
Walking, loving, living there?

Or was it you who did not care?
So rare a gift, did you not know
How few of you there are, how large a group
Whispered thanks for each word, each dare?

It might be easier to forgive you
If the wrong were not so cruel;
Had your words a less cutting power,
Had you not proved we are not fools.

Where can we go to replace this
Vibrant strength and enfolding touch?
Oh, swift-shot economy of structure,
Curving light and love that meant so much.

- Gene Damon

DOWNDROPS

The downdrops of the rain,
in the down-down
of the night,
come down-down-down
in a symphony,
down-down, of delight.

- Audrey Kern

Daughters of BILITIS

INCORPORATED

1st National Convention

MAY 27-30, 1960

HOTEL WHITCOMB — 1231 MARKET STREET

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

'A Look at the Lesbian'

PROGRAM

FRIDAY

8 p.m. Reception for out-of-town guests. To be held at 651 Duncan Street. This will be the Convention HQ for the evening. Telephone number is VA 4-2790.

SATURDAY

Saturday sessions are open to the public.

9 a.m. Registration at the Vista Room, Hotel Whitcomb.

9:30 Address of Welcome - Jaye Bell, president, San Francisco chapter, Daughters of Bilitis.

"About DOB" - Del Martin, National president, Daughters of Bilitis.

10:00 DOB Research Department presents "Some Comparisons Between the Lesbian and the Male Homosexual" drawn from questionnaires circulated throughout the country. Results of the questionnaire with reference only to the Lesbian were published in THE LADDER for September, 1959. Patty Patterson will present the paper.

10:30 PANEL DISCUSSION on "Why the Lesbian?" with Mrs. Bernice Engle of the Langley-Porter Clinic moderating. Panelists are:

Dr. Frank A. Beach of the Psychology Department, University of California at Berkeley, co-author of the book "Patterns of Sexual Behavior".

REGISTRATION BLANK

I would like to register for the following sessions of the DOB convention on Saturday, May 28, 1960.

Entire day's program (incl. lunch and banquet)	$12.50
Morning session	$ 2.00
Luncheon	$ 5.00
Afternoon session	$ 2.00
Banquet	$ 6.00

Amount enclosed $_____ Name _____

Address _____

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Dr. Frank A. Beach of the Psychology Department, University of California at Berkeley, co-author of the book "Patterns of Sexual Behavior".

Patricia Lyon, ethnologist and archaeologist, University of California at Santa Barbara.

Dr. Norman Reider, head of the Psychiatric Clinic at Mt. Zion Hospital, San Francisco.

Dr. Leo J. Zaff, Berkeley clinical psychologist.

Noon LUNCHEON in the Vista Room.

Speaker will be the Rev. Fordyce Eastburn, Episcopal chaplain at St. Luke's Hospital, San Francisco. Topic: "Can the Practicing Homosexual Be Accepted by the Church?"

2 p.m. "Civil Liberties - The Homosexual's Responsibility." Albert M. Bendich, staff counsel for the Northern California Division, American Civil Liberties Union.

3:00 A short dissertation on the problems involved in the writing and publishing of Lesbian novels - Artemis Smith, author of "Odd Girl" and "The Third Sex".

3:30 THE GAY BAR PROBLEM

Sidney Feinberg, area administrator, California Alcoholic Beverage Control Board.

Morris Lowenthal, San Francisco attorney who acted as Amicus Curiae in the "First and Last Chance" bar case.

5:00 Lisa Ben presents a group of Gay folk songs.

5:30 Cocktail Hour in the Vista Room.

7:00 BANQUET in the Vista Room. Kenneth Zwerin, San Francisco attorney, will speak on "The Legal Problems of Lesbian Couples."

Toastmistress for the evening will be Dr. Vera H. Plunkett, San Francisco.

SUNDAY

9 a.m. DOB business meeting - members only. California Room, Hotel Whitcomb.

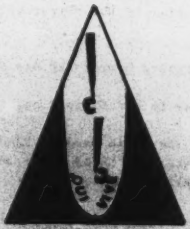
Following the business meeting members will visit DOB National Headquarters and San Francisco chapter offices.

6 p.m. Dutch treat dinner for members and guests (women only).

MONDAY

11 a.m. Continental brunch followed by sightseeing tour. (Members and guests.)

DOB wishes to take this opportunity to extend its heartfelt thanks to everyone who has helped us with this convention.



BOOKS

HUMAN HEREDITY
Ashley Montagu. 1959
The World Publishing Co.

Homosexuality - hereditary or environmental? In his new book Dr. Ashley Montagu, distinguished anthropologist and author of such well-known books as THE NATURAL SUPERIORITY OF WOMEN, ON BEING HUMAN, and MAN: HIS FIRST MILLION YEARS, now explores the rapidly developing science of genetics or heredity as applied to the human species.

Among the many fascinating scientific facts which have recently come to light in this field are some choice tidbits for homophiles. Of considerable interest in the search for the cause of homosexuality are the findings of Dr. Franz Kallman in a study of identical twins.

It has been found that in varying the environment of identical twins, significant differences develop between them particularly in psychological traits. However, it is interesting to note that while such studies disclose it is extremely rare for both twins to commit suicide, it is the general rule for both twins to be of the same sexual orientation. In following a total of 18 sets of identical twins, only one set was recorded in which both had committed suicide, whereas out of a total of 45 pairs of identical twins studied only one pair was found to be discordant for homosexuality.

It is believed that such findings seriously challenge the psychodynamic theories on the cause of homosexuality and strengthen the hypothesis of a genetic basis.

Of particular value in understanding the entire issue of heredity vs. environment is the clarification by Dr. Montagu of the term "environment". Misconception as to the meaning of this word has led to futile disputes about the causative factor in homosexuality, and Dr. Montagu's ex-

planation of the extensive nature of environment sheds welcome enlightenment on the subject. Contrary to popular opinion, environmental influences actually begin at the time of conception or earlier rather than at the time of birth. Dr. Montagu's convincing reasoning shows why the debate is purposeless in the first place since the process of development of an organism is the result of interaction between the environment and the genes and not the action of either factor separately.

-- Leslie Stanton

THE STONEWALL: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY
Mary Casal. 1930
Eyncourt Press, Chicago, Ill.

Apparently this is an undoctored life history of a Lesbian. Mary Casal wrote her life story in a casual, conversational and entirely frank manner. Since Miss Casal was born in 1864 and was at the time of writing 65 years old, the complete detail of her love affair is most amazing.

Miss Casal was born on a farm in New England and apparently was part of the class described as upper middle. Her parents were an odd mixture; her mother a descendent of the very pure Puritans, her father a descendent of a distinguished English family of artists and musicians.

She was the youngest of nine children and her childhood friends were all male. She was raped by a neighbor at an early age and soon after suffered her first "crush" on another girl. By the time she had completed her college education she had had three or four of these little "crushes" and one of them had apparently been physically satisfactory.

In her effort to make her autobiography utterly untraceable, Miss Casal has obscured the sequence of her life to such an extent that dates are impossible to find in relation to her big love affair. However, somewhere in her middle 30s she met and fell in love with a girl two years younger. The affair was entirely complete and very happy for both women for approximately 15 years.

During these happy years the women discovered many others

of like temperament and the author expresses her initial surprise at this because she and her friend had thought they were the only Lesbians in the world. Miss Casal's revelations about the Lesbian worlds of New York and Paris around the turn of this century are most interesting.

Although Miss Casal tries to give the impression that she was never a professional author, it is hard to believe in view of the quality of writing in her memoirs. I heartily recommend this as almost a classic case of Lesbianism. Unfortunately the book is very rare and quite expensive. Those willing to take the trouble can borrow the book through the Library of Congress.

- Gene Damon

VOYAGE FROM LESBOS
Robert C. Robertiello, M. D. 1959.
Citadel Press and Avon Books (paperback)

Subtitled: The Psychoanalysis of a Female Homosexual, and carefully couched in technical terminology, this book, perhaps unintentionally, tends to be a vicious slander on Lesbianism. In the introduction William V. Silverberg, M.D., states that Dr. Robertiello's patient was the "passive type" and that Dr. Robertiello has nothing to say about the "mannish type" and that the book is not intended as a treatise on homosexuality, male or female, since the book concerns only one patient. Unfortunately this one patient is so atypical and anti-Lesbian, even before her analysis begins, that the book sheds little light on anything important to the student of Lesbianism.

Connie, the patient, has lived in an entirely passive relationship for eight years with Jo. Her only infidelity has been a brief affair with a man. No explanation of this is offered. At the end of her relationship with Jo, Connie indulged in a few other equally unsuccessful Lesbian af-

fairs. In each of her liaisons with women she is entirely passive sexually. During the four-year course of her analysis these striking facts come to light: Connie is so apathetic in her everyday relationships that she is little more than a human vegetable. Connie hates and fears women and considers female genitals as inadequate, filthy, etc. Connie hates her partners so seriously she fears she will do them physical violence. Connie's dream life, both waking and sleeping, is mainly concerned with heterosexual symbolism.

It comes as no shock to the reader that after four years of analysis the patient deserts her unstable Lesbian life for an unstable and promiscuous heterosexual life. In all fairness it must be stated that the author introduced his book with a few positive statements about homosexuality in general which are remarkably lenient for a psychiatrist. Among them he said that most homosexuals are "fine upstanding moral and productive people". Unfortunately his subject for analysis was none of these. More importantly, one doubts that the subject could actually be considered a Lesbian in most criteria. Connie was more a bystander watching her own life from the very edges of consciousness. Plainly it all comes down to one point; either you consider your Lesbianism to be a way of life or the symptom of an illness. Connie's was clearly the latter

- Vern Niven

CHRIST AND THE HOMOSEXUAL
Robert W. Wood, 1960.
Vantage Press, Inc.

Having been in the position of seeking a member of the clergy to speak at the forthcoming DOB convention, I for one can certainly appreciate the courageous step taken by Reverend Wood who is the first American to tackle the subject of the homophile and the church openly and forthrightly. Though the pioneer work has been laid by the Church of England and the Baptist Church (also in England), American ministers of the Gospel have been reluctant to face this issue squarely.

For a "first" declaration on the subject here in the United States, Reverend Wood has gone all out - this book is no timid venture. And we tend to wonder what the future holds for Reverend Wood in the ministry of the Congregational Christian Churches. As he himself says, "some of my colleagues have suggested that I ought not to associate myself openly with this book. But the message needs to be proclaimed, and the time is long past due."

The book is dedicated "to the lonely and rejected homosexuals who feel damned" and "also, to my fellow clergy who damn the homosexual...May you find in these pages the Light that is Jesus Christ."

The book deals with the problems of the male homosexual, but Reverend Wood points out the answers offered in the concluding section are equally valid for the male and the female homophile. He cites three conditions whereby homosexual expression may be moral, but to offer these here out of context and without the background material set forth would not serve our purpose. This message should be read in the original - and with a Bible alongside for reference.

Dr. Albert Ellis, who himself is a controversial figure in the unfolding of knowledge about the homosexual, in his introduction to the book offers the clergy the "out" they undoubtedly will seek from Reverend Wood's strong position of acceptance of the homosexual as one of God's children without qualification that he change, or seek the change, his sexual orientation - only that he accept his social responsibilities and seek the highest level of "redemptive love, mature adjustment and creativeness" of which he is capable.

Just as members of the clergy will undoubtedly take Reverend Wood's conclusions with "a grain of salt", we must caution them that Dr. Ellis' position is also open to question. Dr. Ellis not only claims that "fixed deviants are raised rather than born to be the way they are, are emotionally ill, and theoretically can do something to overcome their exclusive homosexuality", but (not in this introduction) he also claims that the exclusive heterosexual as well as the exclusive homosexual is neurotic.

What would the church's reaction be to this "scientific" finding?

Before complete acceptance of Dr. Ellis' position as stated in "Christ and the Homosexual", the clergy must realize that the question of "why the homosexual" is still unanswered, that authorities are still in disagreement, and that Kinsey in "Sexual Behavior in the Human Female" claims there is no valid scientific data to support Dr. Ellis' claim - though there is much support for Reverend Wood's position that homosexuality is a "natural" phenomenon.

The question of the homophile and the church should be treated in the light of Jesus' teachings of love, forgiveness and tolerance. The latter is not always found in today's Christian Church, but this is no excuse for the homosexual. For him to reject God or to become prejudiced and intolerant because he is so treated by misguided followers of the Gospel is equally "sinful".

"Christ and the Homosexual" is a definite step forward in America and it is hoped that more treatises on the subject will be forthcoming. Copies of the book may be purchased through DOB for $3.95 plus 20¢ for handling. (See page 9.)

- Del Martin

POEMS

For those who have been complaining about moony, juvenile poetry, this bit of sophistication - from NIK

My Sympathy to Apathy
And for Sublimation, deep admiration.
Love, of course, is more aesthetic;
But there's nothing like Sex for the energetic.

Or, if you wish -

While abstinence makes the heart grow fonder,
Overindulgence may cause it to wander.
So if you want love of extended duration,
Remember: Not satiety, but just moderation.

READER'S RESPOND

"YOUR APRIL ISSUE OF THE LADDER WAS APPALLING. WHAT PARTICULARLY NAUSEATED AND CAUSED ME TO BLUSH FOR MY FELLOW-READERS WERE THE REFERENCES TO LESBIANS AS 'LEZ'S', 'BUTCHES' ('OFFICE BUTCH'), AND THE LIKE. SUCH THINGS AS 'LESBIAN LOVE-CRUSH' SMACK OF LOW-BROW HETEROSEXUAL BAR-TALK.

"'IT WAS A TREAT WATCHING THEM HUG EACH OTHER IN THEIR NIGHTGOWNS' SOUNDS LIKE SOMETHING THAT SHOULD BE CONFINED TO THE PSYCHIATRIST'S COUCH. IF NOTHING ELSE, EXPRESSIONS SUCH AS '...LOCAL LEZDOM WAS OUT IN FULL FORCE TO SEE THIS...LESFILM' ARE JUST PLAIN BAD TASTE.

"SO WHAT IF SOMEONE'S BREASTS ARE BRIEFLY REVEALED; WHAT DOES THIS MEAN? IS THAT WHAT YOU LOOK FOR IN A MOVIE?

"ADDENDUM BY Z. NEWALL WAS WELL-WRITTEN AND HANDLED NICELY - HOW ABOUT MORE?

"MANY PEOPLE, IRRESPECTIVE OF THEIR SEXUALITY, ENJOY READING INTELLIGENTLY WRITTEN MAGAZINES.

"DO YOU WANT THE LADDER TO GROW AND BE ACCEPTED? DO YOU WANT TO ACT OUT THE STEROTYPE IN THE MIND OF JOHN Q. PUBLIC? IT IS UP TO YOU - AND ME."

AN ANONYMOUS SISTER

"P.S. REMEMBER THIS: WE ARE WOMEN AND WILL REMAIN WOMEN SO LONG AS WE WALK THIS EARTH. I CAN'T FATHOM WHY ANY WOMAN WOULD WANT TO BE CALLED 'BUTCH'. WHY DO WE PREFER WOMEN? I SUPPOSE IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH FEMININITY. THERE ARE REAL MEN WHO ARE MORE FEMININE THAN YOU PRETEND NOT TO BE. GO ON PLAYING YOUR ROLES AND YOUR 'MAMA-PAPA' GAMES AND NOT ONLY SOCIETY WILL RISE UP IN REBELLION AGAINST US, BUT WE'LL BE REBELLING AGAINST OURSELVES, AND MORE AND MORE OF US WILL WITHDRAW IN DESPAIR FROM THE ONLY KIND OF LIFE WE CAN LIVE - FOR WE ARE WORN AND WEARY OF BEING SHOVED INTO THE IMPOSSIBLE MOLDS WE HAVE MADE FOR OURSELVES; WE LOSE OUR IDENTITY,

FOR WE FORGET THAT WE ARE WOMEN AND WILL REMAIN WOMEN SO LONG AS WE WALK THIS EARTH."

* * * * *

"I READ WITH CONSIDERABLE INTEREST LAURAJEAN ERMAYNE'S ARTICLE ON LESBIAN FILMS IN THE APRIL LADDER. IN ANSWER TO HER REQUEST FOR ADDITIONS, MAY I SUGGEST THE FOLLOWING WHICH APPEAR TO HAVE LESBIAN CONTENT OF VARYING DEGREES. THESE ARE FOUND VIA STILLS PRINTED IN 'L'EROTISME AU CINEMA' BY GIUSEPPE LO DUCA (PARIS: PAUVERT, 1958):

"DIE BUCHSE DER PANDORA (LOULOU), BY G. W.PABST; GERMAN, 1928; WITH ALICE ROBERTE AND LOUISE BROOKS.

"PRISONS SANS BARREAUX; FRENCH; 1938; WITH GINETTE LECLERC AND LOUISE BROOKS.

"BROADWAY MELODIES; U.S.; WITH ANITA PAGE AND BESSIE LOVE.

"2000 WOMEN, BY FRANK LAUNDER; GREAT BRITAIN; WITH PATRICIA ROC AND JEAN KENT.

"HANDS ACROSS THE TABLE; U.S., 1935; WITH MARLENE DIETRICH AND CLAUDETTE COLBERT."

R.K., CALIFORNIA

* * * * *

"THE FOLLOWING IS FROM THE NOVEMBER 1959 ISSUE OF 'ARCADIE' AND WAS ENTITLED 'NEWS FROM ITALY' BY MAURIZIO BELLOTTI:

"'....IN THE FILM THE GENIUS OF EVIL (COMPULSION) RECENTLY PRESENTED AT THE FESTIVAL OF CANNES, ONE CAN DETECT AN ATMOSPHERE OF HOMOSEXUALITY, NOT PRONOUNCED BUT SENSIBLE. ONE CAN SAY THE SAME OF A GERMAN FILM, THE GIRL OF BERLIN, WHOSE LEADING ACTRESS IS NADIA TILLER (THE HEROINE OF ROSEMARIE) AND WHICH DESCRIBES POST-WAR BERLIN. ONE NOTICES MAINLY SOME SCENES OF FEMALE COUPLES DANCING IN NIGHT CLUBS.

"'THERE ARE ALSO TWO OVERTLY HOMOSEXUAL SCENES IN AN IGNOBLE

ITALIAN EROTICO-TOURISTICO-SENTIMENTAL RHAPSODY ENTITLED ADVENTURES AT CAPRI. IN ONE OF THE SCENES, PERHAPS THE BEST OF THE FILM, ONE SEES TWO YOUNG GIRLS SITTING AT A TABLE BY THEMSELVES, TO WHOM THE HABITUAL "JULES" MAKES HIS COARSE PROPOSITIONS. THE ONLY ANSWER IS THAT THE TWO GIRLS SQUEEZE EACH OTHER'S HANDS, AND THUS THE TIE WHICH UNITES THEM APPEARS INCONTESTABLY BETTER EXPRESSED THAN BY WORDS.....THE OTHER EPISODE IS THE TENTATIVE CORRUPTION BY A VERY EFFEMINATE MAN OF MAURIZIO ARENA.....'"

L.M., CALIFORNIA

* * * * *

"RECEIVED THE LADDER TODAY AND READ WITH GREAT INTEREST THE REFERENCE TO THE LP '3 OBOLI TO APHRODITE'. (THE LADDER FOR FEBRUARY 1960.)

"THIS STRUCK A CHORD IN ME BECAUSE I HAVE ENJOYED PIERRE LOUYS FOR SOME TIME. AS WELL, THERE IS ANOTHER LP, COL. ML2184, IN WHICH JENNIE TOUREL SINGS THREE CHANSONS DE BILITIS (OF LOUYS) ON ONE SIDE, SET TO PIANO AND VOICE BY DEBUSSY. ON THE OTHER SIDE ARE THREE CHANSONS MADICASSES, ORCHESTRATED BY RAVEL FOR VOICE, PIANO, FLUTE AND 'CELLO; VERSE BY E. PARRY. THIS RECORD CAME OUT IN 1951."

E. W. CALIFORNIA

A READER WROTE US IN THE MARCH ISSUE ADVISING WHERE THE RECORD OF "3OBOLI TO APHRODITE" COULD BE OBTAINED. SHE SUBSEQUENTLY WROTE AGAIN TO STATE THAT THE ADDRESS WAS ERRONEOUS; THE FIRM NO LONGER CARRIED THE RECORD. -ED.

* * * * *

"IT IS VERY ENCOURAGING TO SEE THE GREAT WORK YOU FOLKS ARE DOING. I AM INTERESTED IN KNOWING IF THERE IS A CHAPTER OFFICE ANYWHERE NEAR THE DETROIT AREA. (SORRY, THERE ISN'T. -ED.)

"I HAPPEN TO BE ONE OF THE MORE FORTUNATE PEOPLE WHO DO NOT HAVE TO LIVE TWO LIVES FOR THE BENEFIT OF SOCIETY, ETC., BECAUSE I HAVE NO FAMILY TIES AND MY JOB IS SUCH THAT NO DIFFERENCE IS NOTED."

R.M. MICHIGAN

* * * * *

"ALTHOUGH MY SUBSCRIPTION TO YOUR MAGAZINE IS PAID FOR A FEW MORE ISSUES, I WOULD SINCERELY APPRECIATE YOUR CANCELLING MY SUBSCRIPTION.

"I HAVE BEEN RECENTLY MARRIED AND I'M SURE A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF UNPLEASANTNESS AND UNNECESSARY EXPLANATION WOULD OCCUR IF A COPY FELL INTO THE HANDS OF MY HUSBAND.

"AFTER SEVEN YEARS IN 'GAY LIFE' I BELIEVE THAT I HAVE AT LAST MADE A SUCCESSFUL BREAK FROM WHAT I CONSIDER THE WORST POSSIBLE EXISTANCE FOR MYSELF. I'VE FOUND THAT THE SECURITY OF MARRIAGE MEANS FAR MORE TO ME THAN THE HEIGHTS OF EMOTION AND CERTAINLY MORE THAN THE DEPTHS OF DESPAIR.

"I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW THRILLING IT IS TO BE ACCEPTED BY MY FAMILY AND BY HIS FAMILY AT FACE VALUE. I'VE ALMOST FORGOTTEN TO BE AFRAID OF WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING OR POSSIBLY THINKING OF ME - NO MORE OF THAT AWFUL FEELING OF 'EVERYONE KNOWS...'

"YOU SEE I'M NOT TERRIBLY STRONG IN MY CONVICTIONS YET. AT LEAST, I'M TRYING TO CUT MYSELF AWAY FROM EVERYTHING HOMOSEXUAL AS FAST AND AS PAINLESSLY AS I CAN. I DON'T WANT ANY REMINDERS - EVEN MONTHLY ONES.

"I WAS FASCINATED WITH EVERY ISSUE OF THE LADDER AND IT WILL BE HARD, BELIEVE ME, TO REPLACE IT WITH 'BETTER HOMES & GARDENS'.

"I WISH YOU ALL GOOD LUCK IN YOUR WORK, AND I'LL PROBABLY WISH I COULD HAVE REALLY BEEN ONE OF YOU. I JUST WASN'T STRONG ENOUGH TO FACE IT ALL."

J.E., ILLINOIS

* * * * *

"YOUR CONVENTION PROGRAM SOUNDS WONDERFUL. I SHALL BE THERE NO MATTER WHAT THE COST. THIS IS CERTAINLY A 'FIRST' NO ONE SHOULD MISS.

"AOULD ALSO LIKE TO GIVE THANKS TO ALL OF YOU IN DOB WHO ARE DOING SUCH A WONDERFUL JOB FOR ALL OF US."

P.L., CALIFORNIA

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